

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SAIGON 01978 240704Z

17

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 240410Z FEB 75
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2957

S E C R E T SAIGON 1978

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

EXDIS

PERSONAL FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB, EA

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI VS
SUBJECT: COMMERCIAL AIRLIFT TO PHNOM PENH

1. USSAG HAS SUGGESTED IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO DETAIL TWO OFFICERS TO SAIGON TO SERVE AT TAN SON NHUT AS AIRLIFT MISSION COORDINATORS FOR AIRLIFT, PRIMARILY FOOD, INTO PHNOM PENH. DURATION WOULD BE INDEFINITE SINCE WE DO NOT KNOW HOW LONG AIRLIFT WILL BE REQUIRED.

2. I COMPLETELY AGREE THAT THIS ACTION IS NECESSARY AND IS IN THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES. I HAVE, ACCORDINGLY, GIVEN MY APPROVAL, AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESIDENT, TO THIS DETAIL.

3. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF THE RECENT LEGAL FLAP OVER THE SEVENTEEN AIRMEN, I AM BRINGING THIS TO YOUR ATTENTION SINCE, IN BOTH CASES, THE LEGAL BASIS IS EXACTLY THE SAME, THAT IS THE PROPER PERFORMANCE AND EXECUTION OF A PROPERLY APPROVED UNITED STATES AID OPERATION.

4. IT IS, OF COURSE, QUITE POSSIBLE THAT IN THIS FREE AND OPEN SOCIETY, SOME AMERICAN NEWSPAPERMAN MAY FIND OUT THAT THEY ARE HERE AND REPORT IT, FALSELY ALLEGING, AS IN THE CASE OF THE SEVENTEEN AIRMEN, THAT THEIR PRESENCE VIOLATES THE PARIS AGREEMENTS. I WOULD HOPE THAT WE MIGHT AVOID THIS TIME THE DELAY AND FUMBLING FOR A RESPONSE IN WASHINGTON WHICH MAY CREATE A DAMAGING STORY WHERE

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PAGE 02 SAIGON 01978 240704Z

NONE EXISTS.

5. YOU MAY, THEREFORE, WISH TO PRE-COORDINATE WITH "L" A RESPONSE
TO BE USED SHOULD THE OCCASION ARISE. IF "L" HAS A PROBLEM, YOU
MIGHT STILL WISH TO CHECK WITH GENERAL SCOWCROFT BEFORE ANY ACTION
IS TAKEN TO DEGRADE THE EFFICIENCY OF THE AIRLIFT.
MARTIN

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
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Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: AIR TRANSPORTATION, SUPPLIES, PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS
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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition Authority: buchantr
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